



Guido Schäfer works on a wall at the Provost Marshal's Office.

Saluting those who serve

Guido Schaefer, Directorate of Public Works

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

**222nd Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office**

The room is small, no larger than two and a half by five meters. Bags of tile grout mixture and boxes of new white tiling are spread about the dusty floor.

A stocky figure with closely cropped hair crouches on his knees and concentrates on spreading the pasty gray grout on the wall with a mason's trowel. Guido Schäfer's only comfort is a pair of red knee pads as he shuffles along the floor covering the wall with grout.

Schäfer, a tiler with the 222nd Base Support Battalion's Directorate of Public Works, began working for the U.S. Army on Jan. 1, 2000.

"I find the work here very good. I work in different areas like

masonry and plaster. I do it all," he said.

Schäfer sets the trowel aside and begins to carefully place new tiles on the freshly spread grout. When finished, other colleagues from DPW will rotate through the worksite and install light fixtures and plumbing. In the end the Provost Marshal's Office will have a fully renovated bathroom.

After setting a few tiles in place, Schäfer drags his arm across his brow. He explains that being a tiler for DPW is similar to work he would do with a German firm. "Management however is much bigger," he said. "There are more shops and more areas, but other than that it's the same."

The only difference between working for a German firm and the U.S. Army is that German firms tend to have larger individual projects, he added.

S-GATE provides sponsorship aid

Web tool assists in transition to Europe

By Bruce Anderson

**U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs
Office**

Sponsorship Gateway to Europe, better known as S-GATE, is a web-based program created to ease incoming soldiers' transition to Europe and to make sponsoring those soldiers easier.

"S-GATE is a huge improvement over the past because it's a 21st-century tool that fully automates sponsorship record keeping," said Maj. Kimberley Sinclair, 1st Personnel Command's S-GATE project manager. "It frees the unit from keeping paper files, and provides both the soldier and the unit a multitude of information at the click of a mouse. S-GATE puts a treasure trove of automated information at their fingertips."

"A soldier can learn of his or her 'pinpoint' assignment, get information to help make family travel decisions and get community information," she said. "The program also allows the soldier to communicate via email with the sponsor. S-GATE provides a 'one-stop shop' for information concerning the assignment and a simple means of contacting the unit."

The incoming soldier's main source of information in S-GATE is the soldier page, <https://www.sgate.hqusareur.army.mil>. The soldier visits this web page to find out who his or her sponsor is and how to contact him or her. The soldier page also includes the pinpoint assignment, sponsor information, a welcome letter, a needs assessment checklist and links to other useful USAREUR websites and regulatory information.

"S-GATE is an invaluable, easy to use program that can greatly assist the unit in ensuring that all inbound soldiers receive a great first impression," said Sinclair. "S-GATE provides key leaders fast, fully-automated sponsorship management with real-time accuracy. S-GATE itself will not run the sponsorship program but is a multi-faceted computerized tool to help the unit's sponsorship program."

"S-GATE does not replace the human element of sponsorship," she said. "S-GATE is designed to assist the first sergeant or sponsorship manager forecast needs, match inbound soldiers with sponsors and train unit members to be effective sponsors."

Training unit members to be effective sponsors is easier now than ever before, said Sinclair.

"1st PERSCOM's S-GATE project managers are available to train and assist unit sponsorship managers and can be reached by email at sponsorship@hq.1perscom.army.mil. Any request should contain the unit name and Unit Identification Code, number of soldiers to be trained and the sponsorship manager's name and email address," Sinclair said.

"We have received positive feedback from first sergeants and sponsorship managers who actively use it," Sinclair said. "Many say it is fast, easy and has really boosted their sponsorship program. One inbound soldier from Fort Eustis stated, 'Whoever thought of S-GATE should be thanked. This is great.'"

The program went into effect in February 2001, and the number of inbound soldiers using the system is increasing.

"We have over 130,000 hits to the system. The word to state-side soldiers is spreading and the push is on in USAREUR," Sinclair said.

Calling out for volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of Army community life. Baumholder agencies have ongoing volunteer opportunities for all interested community members.

The **American Red Cross** is in need of volunteers to help with creating new fund-raising opportunities. The Red Cross can help volunteers with child care costs. For more information call Sarah Schmidt at mil 485-1760.

Army Community Service has a volunteer job opening for a property assistant. ACS also provides

help with child care costs for its volunteers. Call April Barnett at mil 485-8188 for more information.

Army Family Team Building is always looking for master trainers and instructors. They provide instructor training and can help with child care costs. Call April Barnett at mil 485-8188 for information.

The Baumholder **Community Spouses Club** is looking for volunteers to help with the Baumholder Community Spouses Club Spring Bazaar. Volunteers can enter an exclusive raffle for vendor prizes. For

information call Sarah Schmidt at mil 485-1760/6313.

Child and Youth Services has volunteer job openings to work on Month of the Military Child and Family Fun Fest projects. Call Tammy Edwards at mil 485-7003

Family readiness groups around post are looking for volunteers to help support unit events and programs. Call your family readiness group leader for details.

The **Finance Office** is looking for volunteers to help with travel, budget and more. Call Diana Ruiz at mil 485-6824.

The **Girl Scouts** seek troop leaders for all areas, but especially Wetzlar, Neubrücke, and Strassburg. They also seek a new Lone Troop committee chair. Call Sue Oppliger at civ (06782) 6892 or Ileana Arvelo at civ (06781) 35130 for details.

Outdoor Recreation is looking for a volunteer to be a climbing wall instructor. Call Werner Graf at mil 485-7182 for information.

Strong showing for city cleanup

**By Ignacio “Iggy”
Rubalcava**

*222nd Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office.*

The American community turned out in force March 16 to help the city of Baumholder clean up its act. About 50 Americans showed up on a foggy but warm Saturday to help the city clean up its streets and the various roads leading into the city during Baumholder’s environmental day.

All together about 100 people turned out to help with the city’s annual cleanup effort. American participation was overwhelming this year, according to Ingrid Schwerdtner, Baumholder deputy mayor.

“Normally we get about 10-20 Americans who help, but this year there were many Americans. I would say about 50 people. There were members of the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and their parents as well as the National Guard. There were many more Americans this year than before,” said Schwerdtner. “The Americans made up the largest

group of participants, and I think that is a good thing,” she said.

After about three hours of scouring the city streets, German and American volunteers collected 12 cubic meters of garbage. The German volunteers included city workers and members of other community organizations.

“I found the cooperation really wonderful. We got together afterwards for food and drinks at the lake, and I think the Americans really enjoyed it,” said Schwerdtner. “I think everyone really enjoyed themselves.”

The city’s environmental day organizers could not have asked for better weather conditions. The day started out foggy, but cleared up quickly and warm weather prevailed. “I think it was ideal weather for this type of work. We need to do this before all the grass and vegetation get so high that you don’t see all the rubbish,” said Schwerdtner.

“On behalf of the city, I would like to thank all the groups and individuals who helped out,” she said.



Baumholder Boy and Girl Scouts join their parents in helping clean up the local area during the city-wide cleanup day March 16. About 50 Americans pitched in to help beautify the local countryside.

Reaching out to boost literacy at Wetzel

By David Ruderman

104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

If it were a race among the “three Rs,” reading and writing would take gold and silver at Wetzel Elementary School. “Promoting literacy is our instructional focus in the schoolroom as well as out in the community,” said principal Debbie Brooks. Involving parents is key to that campaign.

“We try to make them aware of how important it is to start their children early, reading in the classroom and reading in the home. We brainstormed at a faculty meeting and came down to that,” said Brooks.

“All the studies show that children who start early do better in school,” said first-grade teacher Dorrie Meckes. “The children who have been read to are more familiar with books — they recognize rhyming patterns and letters of the alphabet, and know how to hold a book. It’s what professionals call ‘concepts of print.’ The more books and reading materials on hand at home the better start they have.”

Teachers can often tell which children have had that early enrichment and which haven’t, said Meckes, who has 17 years of teaching experience. To encourage parents to increase the positive, early stimulation of their children through reading, Wetzel has reached out to two critical spots outside the school.

A Books for Babies initiative, begun last summer, hands out books to new mothers at the time of their newborn’s first well-baby checkup. The point is to encourage parents to read to their baby from the beginning to acquire a familiarity with the behavior. Comprehension is not the aim, rather it is learning that reading is a normal and pleasurable part of life.

Similarly an Every Moment Counts program makes books and reading material available for youngsters in the clinic’s pediatrics waiting room. A third program called Tales for Tots, where Wetzel partners with the Women, Infants and Children Overseas office, is also on the drawing board. “That’s just in the beginning stages,” said Meckes. “Hopefully we can change people’s attitudes. You have to bring in your whole bag of tricks to get children involved.”

Younger families

The bulk of students at Wetzel come from younger families, largely junior enlisted, said Brooks. Historically the student body has come exclusively from Wetzel Housing. There are presently about 390 students in kindergarten through sixth grade. Wetzel runs three full-time kindergarten classes, a Sure Start program and a pre-school program for 3- to 5-year-olds who exhibit developmental lags.

Brooks had to increase her faculty to 14 this year and rearrange some class distributions to keep pupil-to-teacher ratios within guidelines. Her faculty stayed flexible to accom-



Photo by Susan Chamness

First-grade teacher Dorrie Meckes reads to Wetzel Elementary School students Kiannie DeJesus (left to right), Michelle Brooks, Brya McIntosh and James Penton who listen for vocabulary words and story details.

modate the changes. “They see the need, and the best teaching conditions occur with a lower pupil-to-teacher ratio,” she said.

Meanwhile the push to promote literacy continues throughout the school, drawing on both traditional resources and the innovations of the computer revolution. “I see the information center as an integral part of literacy at Wetzel,” said information specialist Susan Chamness.

“I figure whatever I can get them to read is good if I can get them to learn that reading is fun and interesting. Some will read about snakes, whatever satisfies their curiosity — it’s just a whole variety.”

Whatever the impulse, Chamness encourages it. “The ultimate goal is to help them to become lifelong readers, and

the way to do that is to let them pursue their own interests and find out what the power of reading is,” she said.

Working in tandem with classroom teachers, Chamness helps Wetzel students discover the variety of reading experiences in today’s wired world.

“The whole point of learning this kind of information literacy is that there’s so much information out there. It’s overwhelming, even for me. You have to learn how to navigate that world of information to find what pertains to you or to the information you are trying to find,” she said.

As students return for the final quarter of the school year they will prepare for the upcoming oral reading and oral storytelling contest at Kaiserslautern, the school’s Science Fair and the annual Young Authors’ competition scheduled for May. “We try to write poetry and make books,” said Meckes. “We’ve just been writing as many books as we can.”

Focus on Wetzel Elementary School



School bits

Spring break coming

April 4 will be the last day of third quarter instruction for Department of Defense Dependents Schools. April 5 is a teacher workday; there is no school. Classes resume April 15.

Baumholder second at Academic Games

Congratulations to Baumholder High School freshman Stephen Calabria, sophomore Adrian Palacios, juniors Jan Cannizzo and Lauren Morse and senior Lauren Brooks. The five took second place at the annual DoDDS Europe Academic Games held March 21-22 at Hambachtal that tested the knowledge of 16 teams in such subjects as language arts, science, mathematics and social science. (Courtesy of Kaiserslautern District Superintendent’s Office)

Spring Concert at Hainerberg

The Hainerberg Elementary School fourth- and fifth-grade chorus and third-grade recorder class, accompanied by the 1st Armored Division Band, will perform a Spring Concert at the school April 3 beginning at 6:30 p.m. The concert is free and everyone is welcome to attend.

Specialists sought

DoDDS schools in Darmstadt and Heidelberg seek speech and language pathologists for summer positions that run from June 25 through July 26. Qualified candidates should call Terry Emerson at civ (06221) 338-9373 or Laura Miedema at civ (06221) 338-9337.

Playgroup at Wetzel

Parents throughout the Baumholder community are invited to bring their preschool age children to a play group sponsored by Wetzel Elementary School and EDIS. The group will meet Tuesdays beginning April 16 and run through June 4. For details call mil 485-6179/6710 or civ

(06783) 6-6179/6-6710.

New web addresses

Websites of schools in the Kaiserslautern District have migrated to new Internet addresses: Baumholder High School — www.baum-hs.eu.odedodea.edu; Neubrücke Elementary School — www.neub-es.eu.odedodea.edu; Smith Elementary School — www.baum-ess.eu.odedodea.edu; Wetzel Elementary School — www.baum-esw.eu.odedodea.edu. The new website for the Kaiserslautern District Superintendent’s Office is www.kais-dso.eu.odedodea.edu. Be sure to update your bookmarks. (Courtesy of Kaiserslautern District Superintendent’s Office)

Accelerated withdrawal

Students must apply for accelerated withdrawal in advance and attend school through May 15 to receive credit for their school work. PCSing remains the only acceptable reason for accelerated withdrawal, and schools are not authorized to make exceptions to policy. (Courtesy of Heidelberg District Superintendent’s Office)

'Passport to Vegas' April 4

The Department of Defense show, 'Passport to Vegas,' comes to Baumholder April 4. This evening of entertainment for the entire family will be presented at 7:30 p.m. at the Wagon Wheel Theater. Dancing, singing and more will make this Las Vegas-style show enjoyable for everyone. Admission is free. For more information call mil 485-6115.

Paintball rental

Organized paintball games are offered Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. through Outdoor Recreation. For \$19 you can get a gun rental and field fee. If you have your own gun it is only \$9 for the field fee. For more information call mil 485-7182.

Car detailing and wheel alignment

Car detailing is now available at the Baumholder Auto Skills Center. Auto waxing, buffing, shampooing, deodorizing, window tinting, stereo removal and installation, spoiler kit installation, adhesive pin stripping, alarm system installation and other services are offered. Now is the time to get your car in line. Summer is just around the corner so get your wheels aligned today before you hit the road for summer vacation. Stop by or call mil 485-6344 for more information.

Golfing at Rolling Hills

It's springtime and that means golf. Get your annual membership to the Rolling Hills Golf Course today and enjoy a full year of golf. Come check out the newly renovated Pro Shop. For more information call mil 485-7299.

Family dining at Rheinlander

Looking for somewhere to enjoy a good meal in a cozy atmosphere? Come to the Rheinlander and enjoy the family dining atmosphere. Kids' Delight is offered every Tuesday night and a pasta buffet is on the menu Wednesday. For more information call mil 485-7507.

Fun at Rod and Gun Club

The Rod and Gun Club is an all around fun place to be. Dancing, eating, shooting and more is offered. Come check out the renovations. For details call mil 485-6435.

Month of the Military Child

April is the Month of the Military Child, a time to show appreciation to children for their contributions to the community. Join Com-

munity Youth Services in the numerous activities they have going on during the month for children of all ages. The annual Family Fun Fest is scheduled for April 20 from 1-4 p.m. at the Rheinlander. Bring the family and enjoy a day of free food and activities. Call mil 485-7003 for more information.

Youth Services events in April

April 8 — Shopping trip to Neunkirchen Mall. The cost is \$3 plus spending money. Depart the Underground at 10 a.m.

April 13 — See the Frankfurt Galaxy football team take on the Berlin Thunder at the Frankfurt Waldstadion. The cost is \$20 plus spending money. Depart the Underground at 3 p.m.

April 19 — Month of the Military Child appreciation dance for middle school children at the Underground from 7-11 p.m. Free food and drinks will be available.

April 20 — Midnight sports at the Hall of Champions from 7 p.m. to midnight. Admission is free.

April 26 — Dining out for Turkish cuisine, ordering off the menu. Leave the Underground at 6 p.m.

April 27 — Month of the Military Child appreciation dance for

high school students at the Teen Cafe from 7 p.m. to midnight. There is no admission charge and free food and drinks will be available.

Events are open to ID card holders only. The schedule is tentative and could change based on threat conditions. For more information contact your local Youth Center.

YS also offers **dance classes** for children ages 3-18 years. The cost is \$30 per month. **Chinese Goju classes** are offered in Baumholder Tuesday from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and Thursday from 4-5 p.m. The cost is \$30 per month. **Key-board classes** are offered Wednesday afternoons. The cost is \$20 for private, 45-minute lessons and \$15 for group lessons. Fee must be paid for the whole month. For more information call Youth Services at mil 485-7003.

Thrift Shop positions open

Positions as manager and assistant manager of the Baumholder Thrift Shop are being recruited with



start dates of June 1. The closing date for applications is April 18. Applicants must be at least 18 years old, ID card holders and have a minimum of one year of retention in the Baumholder community. Applications will be assessed for management experience, computer knowledge and customer friendly personality. Selected applicants must have served a month of volunteer time in the Thrift Shop by the position starting date. Details are available in person at the Thrift Shop Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. or by calling mil 485-6653, civ (06783) 6-6653. The Thrift Shop is in Building 8455 on Smith Barracks.

Downrange Incentives for civilians

U.S. Army Europe presently offers a choice of tour extension or relocation bonus to civilian employees who agree to deploy downrange for at least six months. Supervisors may request a relocation bonus for employees who accept assignment downrange in positions that are difficult to fill. The bonus may range from 10-25 percent of the

employee's basic pay depending on the length of deployment. Bonuses are subject to the availability of funds. Extensions of overseas tours beyond the five-year limit may be granted for twice the length of time the employee is deployed downrange, but may not exceed two years. Employees who elect to serve downrange may receive a relocation bonus or a tour extension, but not both for the same deployment. For information on downrange civilian deployment incentives visit the Civilian Human Resource Management Agency website at www.chrma.hqusa.army.mil or email specific questions to goshomg@chrma.hqusa.army.mil.

PCS car cleaning

If you need a little automotive help while preparing to PCS the Auto Crafts Shop and Auto Parts Yard can help. They offer PCS car cleaning that features cleaning the inside and outside of your vehicle and under the hood for \$70. Cleaning under the hood only costs \$35. The cost to purge the fuel system is \$10. Hours of service are Tuesday through Friday from 1-8:30 p.m. and Saturday, Sunday and Monday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. A nonrefundable deposit of \$20 must be paid three days in advance of service. The deposit will be deducted from the total cost. For more information call mil 485-6344 or stop by Building 8438 or 8441.